



ATLAS™ COMICS

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25¢

NO. 1
JUNE
43394

FRIGHT™
FEATURING THE

SON of DRACULA

STARTLING
ORIGIN
ISSUE!!



SPAWNED IN HELL TO
STALK THE NIGHT --
THE STRANGEST
VAMPIRE
OF ALL!

A TINY HAMLET IN THE REMOTE FORESTS OF TRANSYLVANIA...

WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

RIGHT! LIGHT THE FIRE AND LET US BE FINISHED WITH HER!

SUPERSTITIOUS FEAR HAS SPREAD, FED UNKNOWNLY BY THE REAL PRESENCE OF A MORE EXQUISITE EVIL...

FOOLS! SUCH A WASTE OF YOUNG BEAUTY-OF FRESH BLOOD!

LET THE WITCH BURN!

INDEED! WE MUST BE RID OF HER EVIL SPELLS FOREVER!



COWER, PEASANTS! THE MASTER OF ALL MORTALS CLAIMS HER FOR HIS OWN...

TO STAND IN MY WAY MEANS DEATH FROM THE FANGS OF DRACULA!



STORY: Gary Friedrich
EDITOR: Larry Lieber

THE BAT-SHAPED FORM OF COUNT DRACULA, PRINCE OF DARKNESS, SWOOPS TO THE GIRL'S RESCUE AS THE VILLAGERS RECOIL IN HORROR...

AND UNTO
DRACULA
WAS BORN A
SON

FRANK THOSE



IT'S HIM!
IT'S THE
VAMPIRE
COUNT!

VAMPIRES!
ONE BITE
FROM THEM
AND YOU
BECOME ONE OF
THE LIVING
DEAD!

RUN...
RUN FOR
YOUR
LIVES!

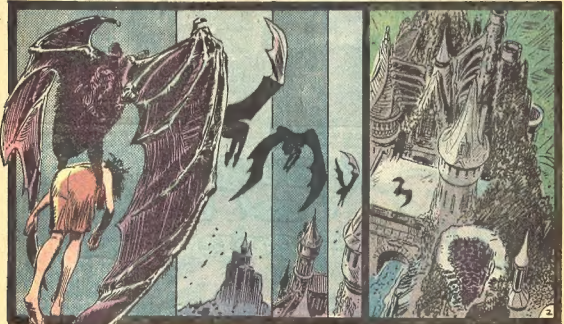
YES FLEE!
FOR THOSE
WHO DOUBT MY
POWER WILL FILL
MY UNCEASING
LUST FOR
HUMAN BLOOD!

AS I ANTICIPATED,
COWARDS WHO
WOULD BURN A
WOMAN AT THE
STAKE WOULD
NEVER FACE
THE TRUE
ESSENCE OF
EVIL!

BUT THEY
WILL
SERVE TO
SOOTHE MY
HUNGER
ON ANOTHER
DAY!

FOR
NOW, IT IS
THIS WOMAN
I CRAVE!

WITH HIS LIMP BURDEN, THE FIENDISH COUNT, IN HIS BAT FORM, VAULTS TOWARD CASTLE DRACULA... FROM WHOSE BLACK CONFINES NO MORTAL HAS EVER RETURNED...



AND NOW, A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN IS SWEEPED INTO DRACULA'S NEST... A MORTAL WHOSE FATE WITHIN THE CASTLE WALLS MAY BE FAR MORE TERRIFYING THAN THAT WHICH SHE FACED AT THE STAKE!

MOMENTS LATER, IN THE CASTLE'S MASTER BEDROOM...

HOW I'VE **THIRSTED** FOR THE PRECIOUS FLUIDS OF ONE AS LOVELY AS YOU!

AT LONG LAST MY THIRST WILL BE **QUENCHED**... AFTER WHICH YOU WILL JOIN ME IN MY NIGHTLY HAUNTS!



IT HAS BEEN FAR TOO LONG SINCE ONE SO FAIR HAS GRACED MY QUARTERS!

ONE WHO IS SO PERFECT... WHOSE SKIN IS SO RADIANT... WHOSE BODY SO **FIRM**... AND, AH YES, THAT **SPLENDID NECK!**



NOOO! THE MARK UPON YOUR **BREAST!** COULD IT BE?!

IT SEEMS **IMPOSSIBLE**... AND YET IT MUST BE **TRUE!** IT IS THE MARK OF MY **FAMILY!** YOU ARE MY ONLY **LIVING RELATIVE!**



AND, THE FOLLOWING MORNING, IN A VAST MAIN DINING HALL FROM WHICH ALL NATURAL LIGHT IS HIDDEN BY THICK HEAVY DRAPERIES...

TELL ME, DEAREST COUSIN, DID YOU **SLEEP WELL?**

YOU CALLED ME **COUSIN!** WHO ARE YOU... AND HOW DID I GET HERE?



WE ARE **FOURTH COUSINS**... YOU ARE THE ONLY DAUGHTER EVER BORN TO A **DRACULA!**

I **RESCUED** YOU LAST NIGHT, BY CONVINCING THE PEASANTS YOU WERE NOT A **WITCH!**



I DIDN'T KNOW I WAS RELATED TO A **COUNT!** HOW DID YOU **RECOGNIZE** ME?

BY YOUR **BIRTH MARK!** I READ OF IT YEARS AGO --- AND HAVE BEEN **SEARCHING** FOR IT... AND YOU... EVER SINCE!

I WANT HER SO **DESPERATELY!** CAN I **CONTROL** MYSELF? MY THIRST IS SO **GREAT!**





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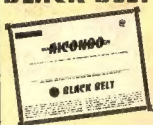
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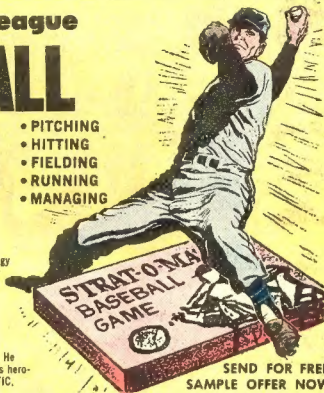
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Address.....

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BUT I---
ONHHHH!

MY LORD!
THE STORIES
ARE TRUE!

NOW
I REMEMBER
THE SAT
LAST NIGHT!

THAT'S WHY THE
WINDOWS IN THIS
ROOM ARE
COVERED. THE
DRACULAS ARE
CURSED---
LIKE THE
VILLAGERS
SAID!



IT IS TRUE, DEAR
COUSIN--- BUT AS
A WOMAN YOU
WERE NOT
AFFLICTED WITH
THE CURSE!

YET NOW, WITH ONE
SWEET FLOW OF
NECTAR FROM
YOUR VEINS INTO
MINE, YOU WILL BE
ONE OF US!

NO--- DON'T! I
BEG OF YOU!
THERE IS
SOMETHING
EVEN MORE
IMPORTANT
I CAN GIVE
YOU---

...AND ALL
OF THE HOUSE OF
DRACULA!

WHAT COULD
BE MORE
IMPORTANT
THAN TO HAVE
YOU JOIN ME?



A SON, COUSIN!
AND ONLY I CAN
GIVE IT TO YOU---
A CHILD WHICH
IS THE PURE
BLOOD OF
DRACULA!

COME, AND
THAT WHICH
YOU WISH
MORE THAN
ALL ELSE WILL
BE YOURS!



WITH ONE
PROVISION---
THAT YOU DO NOT
CONVERT ME TO
BECOME LIKE
YOU!

MEET THIS ONE
CONDITION, AND
THE SON I OFFER
WILL BE YOURS!
I SWEAR BY THE
NAME WE BOTH
PROUDLY BEAR!

HOURS LATER, AS DARKNESS ONCE MORE OVERTAKES THE REMOTE CASTLE...



TAKE CARE,
DEAR COUNT. THE
SON I BEAR YOU
WILL NEED HIS
FATHER!

HAVE NO FEAR
AND REST
WELL...

THE MOON IS
HIGH AND I
HAVE BEEN
TOO LONG
WITHOUT
SUSTENANCE!

AND SO IT CAME TO PASS...
NINE MONTHS LATER...

NOW I HAVE
FULFILLED MY END
OF OUR BARGAIN!
LOOK UPON YOUR
OFFSPRING--A
HEALTHY BOY
CHILD!



BUT AS SOON AS
I'M ABLE, YOU'LL
NOT SEE HIM
AGAIN! HE MUST
NEVER BECOME
ONE OF YOUR
KIND!

SILENCE, WOMAN! LET
ME GAZE UPON MY
CHILD! I CAN HARDLY
BELIEVE IT---MY OWN
SON!



YOUR SON, YES---
BUT YOURS TO
RAISE---NEVER!
STAY AWAY FROM
HIM ---OR I
SWEAR I'LL
SMOTHER HIM
HERE WITHIN THE
PLANKETS ON
WHICH HE WAS
BORN!

WHAT? YOU
DARE TO DEFEY
ME---TO
DENY ME
RIGHT TO
MY SON?!



YOU HAVE SERVED
YOUR PURPOSE, YOU
ARE OF NO FURTHER
USE TO ME!

IT IS TIME FOR
YOU TO TRULY
JOIN ME!



NOOOOOOOOOO



EEEEEEEEEE

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NEXT MORNING, AS A TRIUMPHANT COUNT DRACULA LIES IN PEACEFUL REPOSE ON A BED OF HIS NATIVE SOIL...

YOU UNDERESTIMATE ME, DRACULA! THOUGH I AM WEARY FROM YOUR SITE...

...MY WILL YET REMAINS MY OWN! NOW, BEFORE SUN-SET TONIGHT...

...I MUST ARRANGE THAT MY CHILD BE FREE FROM DRACULA FOREVER!

WE WILL BE SAFE FROM THE VAMPIRE UNTIL DARK... HE CANNOT SURVIVE IN SUNLIGHT!

FATE IS KIND, AND THE YOUNG MOTHER BIDS A LAST FAREWELL TO HER SON...

REMEMBER... UNTIL THE BOY IS MUCH OLDER, HE MUST ALWAYS WEAR THIS CHARM AROUND HIS NECK!

FOR SHOULD ANYTHING HAPPEN TO THE CHARM, THE BOY MIGHT DIE!

BUT EVEN AS THE SHIP GETS SAIL FOR AMERICA...

WE'LL BE SAFE WITH HER! SHE'S A GOOD WOMAN, AND SHE KNOWS OF THE POSSIBLE CURSE...

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU, MY DEAR! HOW GLAD I AM TO HAVE FOUND YOU AT LAST! COME, LET ME TASTE THAT WHICH I SO DESPERATELY CRAVE!

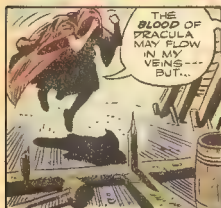
AND AFTER THE BLOOD-DRAINING KISS...

NOW, MY
DEAR,
WHERE IS
OUR
SON?

BY TOMORROW NIGHT
YOU TOO WILL BE A
VAMPIRE---WHO WILL
WANT HER SON TO
JOIN US!

NO-- NEVER! JUST
AS I WILL NEVER
SERVE YOU NEITHER
WILL HE!

THERE IS STILL
HOPE FOR HIM
TO KNOW PEACE
AS I NOW WILL
KNOW IT!

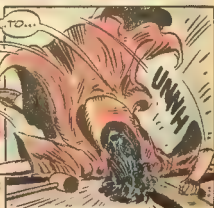


THE
BLOOD OF
DRACULA
MAY FLOW
IN MY
VEINS---
BUT...

THERE
...IS STILL
TIME...

WAIT!

TO...



UNNH

CHEATED! I'VE BEEN
CHEATED OF THE ONE
WHICH HAS GIVEN MY
LIFE MEANING!

BUT THIS
I SWEAR--

-- I WILL SEEK OUT THE
BLOOD OF MY BLOOD---
THE FLESH OF MY
FLESH...

...I WILL
FIND THE SON
OF DRACULA!

HOWEVER, NOT EVEN THE OCCULT
POWERS OF THE EVIL COUNT CAN
SPAN THE VAST ATLANTIC OCEAN.
THUS, SOME SEVEN YEARS LATER
IN A MINING TOWN IN APPALACHIA...

YOU'VE GROWN
INTO A FINE YOUNG
LAD.

MOTHER--- THIS
GLASS AROUND
MY NECK--- WHY
CAN'T I EVER
TAKE IT OFF?

AND WHY DO I
HAVE TO SLEEP
WITH A CROSS
ON MY CHEST
EACH NIGHT?

LORD HELP ME,
I KNEW IT WOULD
COME ONE DAY---
THE FATEFUL
QUESTION AND
THE IMPOSSIBLE
ANSWER!!



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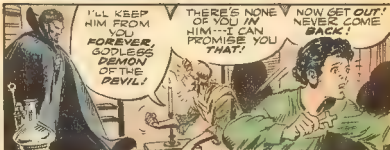


PERHAPS I CAN SATISFY YOUR CURIOSITY, BOY!

YOU SEE, I AM A *RELATIVE*... AND I KNOW ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT YOU!

YOU! I... I ALWAYS KNEW YOU'D FIND US ONE DAY!

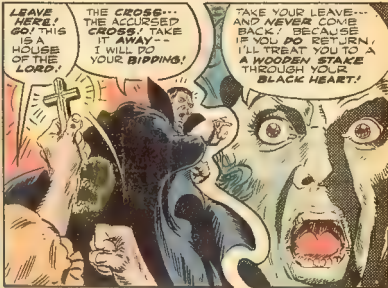
DEREK---
GO TO YOUR ROOM...
TAKE YOUR CROSS
WITH YOU-- SCAT!



I'LL KEEP HIM FROM YOU FOREVER, GODLESS DEMON OF THE DEVIL!

THERE'S NONE OF YOU IN HIM---I CAN PROMISE YOU THAT!

NOW GET OUT! NEVER COME BACK!



LEAVE HERE! GO! THIS IS A HOUSE OF THE LORD!

THE CROSS... THE ACCURSED CROSS! TAKE IT AWAY--- I WILL DO YOUR BIDDING!

TAKE YOUR LEAVE... AND NEVER COME BACK! BECAUSE IF YOU DO RETURN, I'LL TREAT YOU TO A WOODEN STAKE THROUGH YOUR BLACK HEART!

YOU CANNOT KEEP HIM FROM ME ANY LONGER-- HE IS MY SON!

VERY WELL-- YOU ARE IN COMMAND FOR NOW! BUT BE WARNED, WOMAN---

--WHEN NEXT I RETURN, NOT ONLY WILL I RECLAIM MY SON---

--I WILL ALSO DRINK THE VERY LIFE'S BLOOD FROM YOUR WRETCHED BODY-- AND MAKE YOU ONE OF MY FOLLOWERS!



SHORTLY AFTER DRACULA HAS
DISAPPEARED INTO THE SHADOWS...

BUT WHERE
ARE WE GOING,
MOTHER?! IT'S
ALMOST BED-
TIME, AND...

HURRY, ADAM!
DON'T ASK
QUESTIONS!
JUST HOLD YOUR
CROSS AND DO
AS I SAY.

THERE...
NOW JUST LIE
DOWN AND GO
TO SLEEP. WE'LL
STAY HERE
TON GHT...

TO MAKE
SURE WE'RE
SAFE FROM THAT
TERRIBLE MAN!

JUST HOLD ONTO
YOUR CROSS...AND
IF I SHOULD BE
GONE WHEN YOU
WAKE UP...

SLEEP...
NO MATTER
HOW LONG IT
MAY BE, THE
CROSS WILL
KEEP YOU
RESTING...

...AND
PERHAPS
WHEN
SOMEONE
FINDS YOU
AND REMOVES
IT... AND
YOU WAKE
UP...

...I PRAY
THE THREAT
OF DRACULA
WILL BE
REMOVED
FROM YOUR
HEAD
FOREVER!

NOW KEEP WATCH FOR
THAT STRANGER, WHILE
I OPEN THE WINE CELLAR
DOOR AND LIGHT THE
LAMP!

-- I WANT YOU
TO READ THIS
BOOK. I'M LEAVING!
IT WILL HELP YOU
TO UNDERSTAND
ALL.

MOMENTS
LATER,
OUTSIDE
THE
CELLAR...

THE
CROSS WILL
KEEP HIM
ALIVE--NOW
I'VE ONLY TO
SEAL HIM
IN...

...AND NO
MATTER
WHAT
HAPPENS
TO ME, AT
LEAST HE'LL
BE SAFE
FROM
DRACULA!

GUN
POWDER

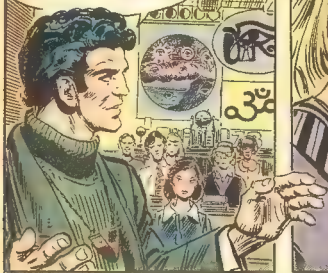
BE WITH US, O!
LORD --- AND FORGIVE
ME FOR TAKING
MY OWN LIFE!

BUT IF I DO NOT,
THEN SURELY
DRACULA WILL ADD
ME TO HIS LIVING
DEAD!



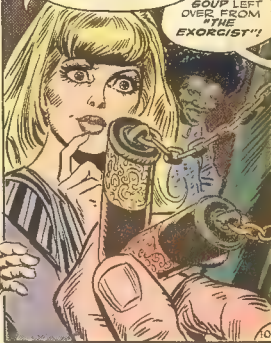
TIME PASSES...UNTIL NOW, IN THIS
YEAR 1975, A YOUNG COLLEGE
PROFESSOR, NAMED ADAM LUCARD
PREPARES TO BEGIN HIS TEACHING
CAREER ON THE CAMPUS OF
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN NEW
YORK CITY...

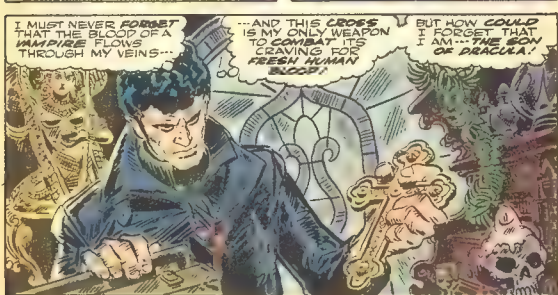
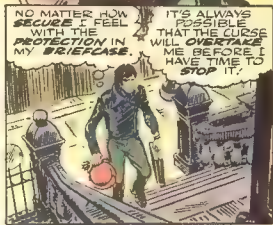
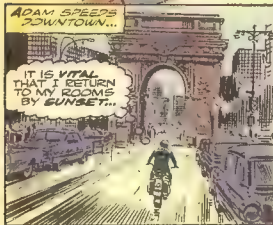
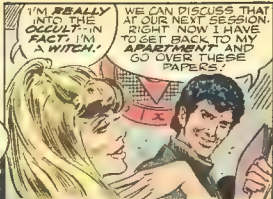
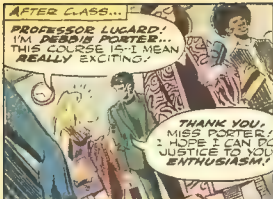
THIS COURSE IS CALLED
"THE OCCULT: FACT OR
FICTION?", AND IT WILL
BE UP TO YOU TO DECIDE
WHICH IT IS...BEFORE
THE COURSE IS OVER!



WHAT DO YOU THINK,
PROF LUCARD? DO YOU
BELIEVE IN WITCHCRAFT
AND THAT KIND OF STUFF?
I MEAN, WHAT'S THAT
THING AROUND YOUR
NECK?!

WELL,
LET'S
JUST
SAY IT
ISN'T A
VIAL
OF PEA
SOUP LEFT
OVER FROM
"THE
EXORCIST"!





STILL, IT'S NOT **CERTAIN** THAT THE BLOOD OF MY FATHER WILL AFFECT ME!

WHAT IF I HAVE SPENT ALL THESE LONELY NIGHTS, LYING UNCONSCIOUS WITH A **CROSS** UPON MY CHEST, **NEEPLESSLY!**

WHAT IF I WOULD NOT BECOME A VAMPIRE AT SUNSET EVEN **WITH-OUT** THE PROTECTION OF THE **CROSS**?

NO! I DARE NOT ASK SUCH QUESTIONS. THE RISKS ARE FAR TOO GREAT.

I MUST BELIEVE THAT THE **CROSS** RENDERS ME UNCONSCIOUS EACH NIGHT AS IT'S WRITTEN IN THE **BOOK!**

YES, I **MUST** OBEY THE **BOOK!** IT IS MY ONLY CHANCE TO AVOID MY FATHER'S **CURSE!**

DURING THE LIGHT OF DAY I **MUST** PROTECT MYSELF BY WEARING A **VIAL** OF **NATIVE SOIL** ABOUT MY NECK--

... AND AT NIGHT THE **GOLDEN CROSS** PREVENTS ME FROM BECOMING MY FATHER'S **SON!**

MY MOTHER WAS **RIGHT**. I MUST ALWAYS HEED HER **DEATH BED WARNING!**

READ THE **BOOK**, MY SON! IT WILL TELL YOU EVERYTHING YOU MUST KNOW--TO **SURVIVE**.

YOUR FATHER AND I FOUND YOU IN A **CAVE**... AND THIS **BOOK** WAS LYING BESIDE YOU!

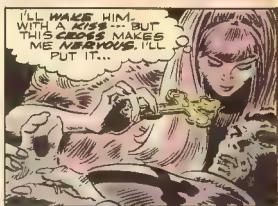
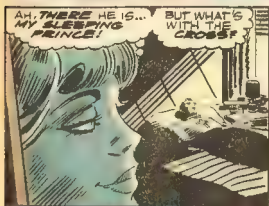
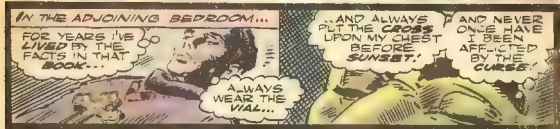
BUT AS ADAM DREAMS...

BUSTING INTO APARTMENTS FOR COLLEGE TUITION MAY BE A **NECESSITY**--BUT GETTING NEXT TO THAT **GORGEOUS** PROF WILL BE A **LUXURY!**

AND EVEN THOUGH WE **KNEW** ITS CONTENTS, WE STILL TOOK YOU TO RAISE AND **LOVE** AS OUR OWN SON!

MY TIME HAS COME TO **LEAVE** YOU--AND YOU MUST AT LAST KNOW THE **TRUTH!**

I'LL USE THIS **MASTER KEY**... AND TELL HIM I GOT IN BY THE POWER OF **WITCHCRAFT!**



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OPD---
SHE LOOKS
FAMILIAR!
COULD I
KNOW HER
FROM SOME
WHERE?

BUT WHAT
DIFFERENCE?!
ALL THAT
MATTERS IS
MY THIRST--
MY INSATIABLE,
ALL-CONSUMING
THIRST!

I AM POWER-
LESS BEFORE
MY INHUMAN
DESIRE--I
CRAVE THE
DELICIOUS
VEINS OF HER
NECK AS A
STARVING
MAN CRAVES
BREAD...

...AND
MY HUNGER
CANNOT BE
DENIED!

ANHHH.
SWEET
NECTAR!

AT LONG
LAST...

I LIVE
AGAIN!!

BUT LIKE FINE
WINE, ONE SIP
IS NOT ENOUGH.
I MUST HAVE
MORE!

SURELY, IN
SO LARGE A
CITY AS THIS
YET ANOTHER
PORTION
CANNOT BE
HARD TO
FIND!

I WILL STALK MY
VICTIM IN A MORE
CONVENIENT
FORM...

THE FORM
OF A BAT!!

MINUTES LATER...

WHAT'S KEEPIN' DEBBIE? WE'VE GOT TO RIPOFF A COUPLA APARTMENTS YET TONIGHT!

SHE'S PROBABLY MAKIN' OUT WITH THAT CREEPY PROFESSOR SHE WENT TO SEE!

IN A FEW MORE MINUTES I'M GONNA PULL THE JOBS MYSELF!

THEN SHE'LL HAVE SOME EXPLAININ' TO DO TO THE BOSS!

AHHH, ANOTHER SOURCE OF SUSTENANCE! THIS WILL BE EASIER THAN I THOUGHT!

GOOD EVENING. MAY I ASK WHY ONE SO LOVELY WALKS THESE STREETS ALONE AT THIS LATE HOUR?

HEY!! DO YOU ALWAYS GO AROUND SNEAKING UP ON WOMEN, MAC?! IT'S A GOOD WAY TO GET A FACE FULL OF MACE!

DO NOT THREATEN ME, MY DEAR! NONE OF MANKIND'S PETTY WEAPONS CAN STAND IN THE WAY OF DRACULA'S SON!

MY GOD!! OOOHHH!

SILENCE, MY SWEET! YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR...

LIFE ETERNAL IS YOURS!



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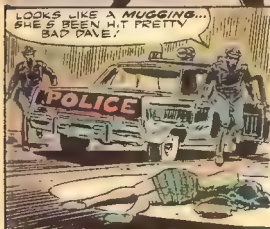


THEN, AS THE LONG-THIRSTING VAMPIRE DRAINS THE LAST PRECIOUS DROP FROM HIS VICTIM...

POLICE PATROL!



I HAVE HAD ENOUGH FOR ONE NIGHT! THERE IS NO NEED FOR GLUTTONY!



LOOKS LIKE A MUGGING... SHE'S BEEN HIT PRETTY BAD DAVE!



TWO HOLES IN HER NECK... AND SHE'S SO PALE... LIKE SHE'S BLED TO DEATH!

WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND HERE?



TWENTY MINUTES LATER...

IT'S A HOMICIDE, ALL RIGHT... BUT IT'S HARD TO FIGURE THE MOTIVE! HER PURSE WASN'T STOLEN... AND ALL THE MONEY'S STILL IN IT!

THIS IS A FAR OUT SUGGESTION, BUT LOOKIN' AT THEM PUNCTURES IN HER NECK--AND SEEN' AS THERE'S NO BLOOD...

...MAYBE THERE'S A VAMPIRE LOOSE IN THE 19TH PRECINCT!

DON'T LET THE NEWS GUYS GET WIND OF THAT NOTION OR WE'LL HAVE A PANIC ON OUR HANDS!

DAWN... IN THE LODGINGS OF ADAM LUCARD...

OH... MY HEAD! IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D SWEAR I TIED ONE ON LAST NIGHT!

STRANGE, THE CROSS ALWAYS ASSURES ME OF A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP!

THE CROSS-- WHERE IS IT?

MY GOD! IT'S GONE!

WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED-- WHAT MIGHT I HAVE DONE?!

BLOOD! MY SHIRT IS COVERED WITH BLOOD!

WHY CAN'T I REMEMBER? COULD I HAVE... COULD THE CURSE...

OH LORD! NO!!

HEAVEN FORGIVE ME, IT'S FINALLY HAPPENED! I CAN'T REMEMBER... BUT I MUST HAVE DONE THIS!

BUT HOW! - WHAT HAPPENED TO MY PROTECTIVE CROSS? DID SOMEONE REMOVE IT--

...OR DID THE BLOOD OF MY FATHER FINALLY OVERCOME THE CROSS POWER? IF IT DID... THEN I AM... A HOPELESS VAMPIRE!

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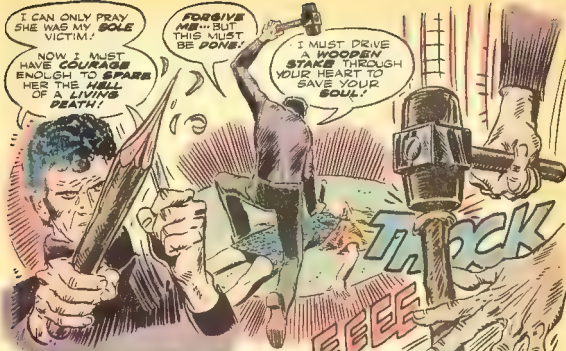
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I CAN ONLY PRAY
SHE WAS MY **SOLE**
VICTIM!

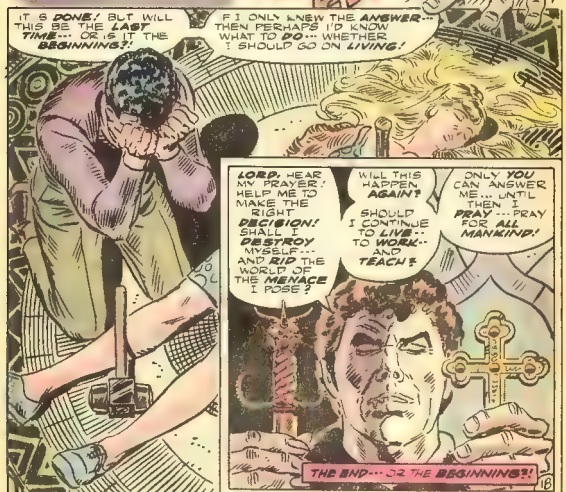
FORGIVE
ME... BUT
THIS MUST
BE **DONE!**

NOW I MUST
HAVE **COURAGE**
ENOUGH TO **SPARE**
HER THE **HELL**
OF A **LIVING**
DEATH!

I MUST DRIVE
A **WOODEN**
STAKE THROUGH
YOUR HEART TO
SAVE YOUR
SOUL!

THACK

FEEL



IT'S **DONE!** BUT WILL
THIS BE THE **LAST**
TIME... OR IS IT THE
BEGINNING?!

IF I ONLY KNEW THE **ANSWER...**
THEN PERHAPS I'D KNOW
WHAT TO **DO...** WHETHER
I SHOULD GO ON **LIVING!**

LORD, HEAR
MY **PRAYER!**
HELP ME TO
MAKE THE
RIGHT
DECISION!
SHALL I
DESTROY
MYSELF...
AND **RID** THE
WORLD OF
THE **MENACE**
I **POSE?**

WILL THIS
HAPPEN
AGAIN?

SHOULD
I **CONTINUE**
TO **LIVE...**
TO **WORK...**
AND
TEACH?

ONLY **YOU**
CAN **ANSWER**
ME... UNTIL
THEN I
PRAY... PRAY
FOR ALL
MANKIND!

THE END... OR THE BEGINNING?!

WELCOME TO MY NIGHTMARE

David Anthony Kraft

Dracula.

Lord of the Undead. Prince of Darkness.

The legend not only persists, but it grows, transmitted directly through the entertainment media of an electronic age to the fantasy-starved consciousness of new generations.

Old legends never die.

They are just adapted into new idioms, updated, permuted to suit the times. From Bram Stoker to Bela Lugosi to Christopher Lee to Andy Warhol, from literature to movies to popular paperbacks to comicbooks—the evolution of the legend of the Master of Night continues.

Dracula. It is a sinister word that has passed into common usage. Yet it has not outworn its insidious appeal. Witness the continuing proliferation of interest in the cloaked nightstalker, most recently evidenced by Andy Warhol's **DRACULA**, a cinematic bloodbath. And then, of course, there's the newest variation on the classic crimson theme—**SON OF DRACULA**. You're holding it.

There is a generally-acknowledged human need to experience vicariously the repulsive—albeit fascinating—nightmare of violence. As a culture, we have a tradition of respected literature exploring the realm of the unholy; and we continue to produce contemporary outlets for the cathartic release of pent-up violence, such as movies, books and even rock 'n' roll stage acts like Alice Cooper.

Thus the surreal world of nightmare extends into the reality of today, despite every attempt to stifle or abolish it, and it is in this waking nightmare that the Son of Dracula must exist. (I'll bet you were *wondering* when I'd get to specifics and discuss the issue in hand!)

This premiere effort has not been easy. First came the concept conferences, three-way exchanges held here in New York, with publisher Chip Goodman, editor Larry Lieber and writer Gary Friedrich in attendance. Then Gary returned to his native Missouri, where he prepared the first script after conferring with Larry via telephone to confirm the plot.

The finished script then went to Frank Thorne, artist par excellence, who proceeded to hold it captive somewhat past the rapidly-approaching deadline, but for all the *right* reasons. For instance, meticulous perfectionist that he is, Frank completely redrew the cover *three times*! That's dedication.

Meanwhile, Gary Friedrich mysteriously reappeared in New York City, to see the miniscule editorial staff (namely, Larry and myself) through a particularly heavy week of work, and at that time I proposed to him that he write this text page, to which he readily agreed. Unfortunately, other assignments took precedence, and Gary dutifully flew back to Missouri to script his next round of Atlas titles, leaving the pleasant chore to me.

Of course, I'm not exactly a stranger to the legend, either, having written more than a couple Dracula scripts for Marvel, so I guess that qualifies me. As I sit here on April first, typing these lines, the final few pages of interior artwork still have not arrived—but, peculiarly, by the time you read these words, the next issue will be pencilled . . . and maybe even inked.

Meanwhile, we'll be waiting for the first wave of reader response and—if we're any judge of these things—it shouldn't be long in coming.

Dracula.

The legend is certainly not new, and it's been "done to death" in the popular media. That's where ingenuity and creativity come in—devising new angles on an old subject. Bringing immediacy to the overly-familiar. And excitement.

Son of Dracula.

Conflict and rebellion in the world of today with a youthful protagonist: storylines with a basis in reality, nightmare clothed in contemporary modes of expression. These are the proper areas of exploration in issues to come, for the Son of Dracula is anything but a traditional vampire bound up in anachronistic pursuits.

And if you don't believe it, wait and see!

Tally ho.

—DAK



Here's What's Happening With

ATLAS

A LETTER FROM LARRY LIEBER

They say that in the beginning was the word—but in my case, it was the **PICTURE** . . . for I was an artist before I became a writer.

Then, in 1958, I shifted gears and starting **WORDING** it for Marvel Comics . . . a not unlikely choice, considering that the editor was my brother. Some of you may have heard of him—his name is **STAN LEE**.

In those long ago, halcyon days, Stan plotted and scripted; I scripted; and a fellow named Jack Kirby just drew (about six pages a day).

Among my classic comic endeavors were the first **THOR**, the first **IRON MAN**, and the first **ANT MAN**. Thus, I gave to the world the name *Henry Pym* and a hammer called *Uru*. In return, the world gave me a chance to work with some of the most talented people in this industry . . . and none more so than Stan, himself (who taught me that *dialogue* is more important than *captions*, and *pay vouchers* are more important than either).

Then, for some forgettable reason, I left the world of superheroes and went **WEST**, young man . . . where I plotted, scripted, and pencilled **THE RAWHIDE KID** for a half-dozen years, pausing only to limn two **SPIDER-MAN ANNUALS**—which were aptly named, considering how long I took to limn them.

After that tour of duty, I reentered the twentieth century

And just to prove we're not whistling in the dark when we say that **ATLAS** is where it's at, here's what we have up our editorial sleeves (besides our elbows)!

To begin with, you know and we know that the **ATLAS** line is like a gem in the rough, subject to continuing refinement until it achieves the finish and shine of a polished jewel. More specifically, that means we're working hard at improving our present titles, trying new directions, and expanding our horizons with fresh ideas and concepts.

In other words, we're experimenting with the tried and true, as well as the new. And, to relieve your unbearable suspense, here are some of those exciting items. Let's begin with the new ones.

By now, you've seen the first issue of **THE BARBARIANS**, a sword-and-sorcery stew of savage worlds and even more savage men. *Ironjaw* and *Andrax* shared the debut issue; but waiting in the wings for #2 is *Wulf the Barbarian*—and just wait'll you see what all-new high-action hero is waiting in the wings for the third issue of **THE BARBARIANS**! It will be fantasy adventure at its finest!

For your delectation, we also have **HANDS OF THE DRAGON**, a martial arts effort with a difference (and for a mere 25¢, you'll discover what that difference is). It's chronicled by *Ed Fe-*

dory and our dashing new discovery from Canada, *Jim Craig*. By now you've seen *Jim's* exciting artwork on **THE SCORPION**, and since his enthusiasm is equalled by stamina and greed, he'll also be illustrating **WULF THE BARBARIAN**, with *Mike Friedrich* scripting (they start with #4).

But those aren't the only surprises in store for you—not by a long shot! Coming up next are not one, but two new books by *Rich Buckler* and *David Kraft*: Immediately following his premiere appearance in **TALES OF EVIL** #3, the **MAN-MONSTER** goes wild in his own bi-monthly magazine; and, on opposite months, you can pick up **DEMON-HUNTER**, destined to be one of the most action-packed quasi-superhero strips in the awesome age of **ATLAS**. Don't miss his origin in the epic collectors' item first issue!

But even that's not all. We've been saving the best for last—it's **SON OF DRACULA** by *Gary Friedrich* and *Frank Thorne*. Words can't do it justice. But you can do yourself a favor and pick up the first breathtaking issue; it's a *twist* on anything you might expect!

There's just enough room now to touch on some of the changes to watch for in current and upcoming issues of comics such as **MORLOCK 2001 & THE MIDNIGHT MEN** (the title ought to give you a hint, cause we're

and pencilled some of Marvel's mightiest covers . . .

until coming to work for **ATLAS**, where I now sit on the other side of the desk, breathing editorial life into this new major comics company.

But I'm lucky. Though the names have changed, the talent remains undiminished—as you'll discover for yourself when you read stories and view artwork by writers like **GARY FRIEDRICH** and illustrators such as **FRANK THORNE**.

I also have the good fortune to be employed by a publisher who's unafraid to roll up his sleeves. His name is **CHIP GOODMAN**, and for you aficionados of historical data, his father founded Marvel Comics way back when.

Last, but not least, I have an able editorial assistant, **DAVID KRAFT**, about whom you'll certainly be hearing more.

And now, to the overdue point of all this. Every comics company in this industry wants to give you, the reader, the **BEST WRITTEN** and **BEST ILLUSTRATED** stories possible. Here at **ATLAS**, our intent is no less.

I'm certain that we'll succeed! Just wait and see!

LARRY LIEBER
Editor

not going to say much more, other than that #3 is presented by the team of *Gary Friedrich*, *Steve Ditko* and *Berni Wrightson*).

And then there's **THE PHOENIX**, gaining "wings" and a new direction with the fourth issue, under the guidance of *Gary F.* and (hopefully) *Jack Abel*. Also in the department of new directions, "Plague of Blood" in **PLANET OF VAMPIRES** #3 by *Russ Heath* and *John Albano*—sets the scenario for horrors to come.

While we're at it, we'll remind you not to miss **TIGER-MAN** #3 and **THE DESTRUCTOR** #4, both by that peerless pair, *Gerry Conway* and *Steve Ditko*. Of course, **IRONJAW** and **THE BRUTE** will be forging new standards of excellence, helmed by our prolific *Gary Friedrich*, and *Pablo Marcos* (after an art fill-in on the third issue of the latter by *Al Weiss*). Okay, enough is enough—we can tell when we've wog-boggled you sufficiently for this issue. But don't go away, because there'll be lots more news next time—all of it good, if we can help it!

In the meantime, read up and let us know what you think about **ATLAS**. Write to the letter columns. We're depending on you to let us know what you like.

And remember: If it's amazing, astonishing, adventurous—it's **ATLAS**!

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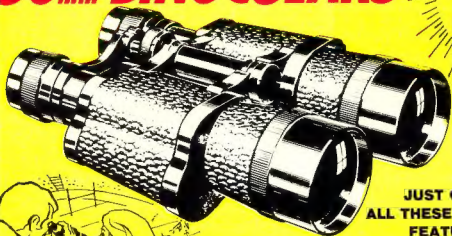
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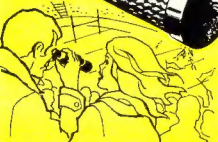
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